



NEWS RELEASE

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California Department of Consumer Affairs Invites High Schools to Participate in National Competition that Prepares Students for their Future

California will host the 2005 national competition for LifeSmarts, a program that teaches teens important consumer skills

SACRAMENTO – California teens can still sign up to participate in LifeSmarts, an educational program that develops the consumer and marketplace skills of teenagers and rewards them for their knowledge. The California Department of Consumer Affairs, which is spearheading LifeSmarts activities in the state, has extended an invitation to high schools and community groups to participate in this no-cost competition.

“LifeSmarts draws on the natural competitive nature of teens and channels that energy to help them learn things they really need to know for their adult lives, including the kinds of rights and responsibilities they have as consumers,” said Charlene Zettel, director of the California Department of Consumer Affairs. “We live in a country where teenagers spend over \$100 billion of their own money each year, which makes programs like this even more important.”

LifeSmarts is open to all teens in grades nine through twelve and is designed to complement school curriculum. Students work in classrooms or with coached teams to learn about credit cards, consumer debt and financial issues that are vital in today’s marketplace. The program also encourages teens to study health and safety, the environment, and technology.

The California Department of Consumer Affairs is working with the National Consumers League to promote LifeSmarts to students and teachers throughout the state. California will host LifeSmarts’s national finals on April 16-19, 2005, in San Francisco.

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The first phase of the competition is Internet-based and will continue through February 4, 2005. California teams demonstrating the strongest consumer knowledge during online competition will win an all-expense paid trip to Sacramento to compete in a state level competition, to be held March 2, 2005. Winners of the state competition will win prizes and a trip to San Francisco to represent California at the national competition.

More information is available online by visiting the California Department of Consumer Affairs Web site at www.dca.ca.gov and clicking on the LifeSmarts link.

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